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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 7474
INFO RUEHCL/AMCONSUL CASABLANCA 3529
RUEHEE/ARAB LEAGUE COLLECTIVE
RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS 4784
RUEHMD/AMEMBASSY MADRID 5792
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TAGS: [PINR](#) [PGOV](#) [MO](#)
SUBJECT: BIOGRAPHY OF ABBAS EL FASSI, PRIME MINISTER DESIGNATE

11. Abass El Fassi was born on September 18, 1940 in Berkane, near the Algerian border. His father was a local judge and his father-in-law was Allal El Fassi, the founder of the Istiqlal Party and the leader of the independence movement. Born to the party, Abbas joined the Istiqlal youth scout movement. He studied law in Morocco and later practiced as an attorney.

12. In 1961 he was elected President of the Moroccan Student General Union (a student organization affiliated with the Istiqlal). In 1972, he became Secretary General of the Moroccan League for Human Rights, but any such activity was sharply limited at the time. In 1974, he was elected to the 16-member National Executive Committee of the Istiqlal. He was re-elected to the committee twice (1978 and 1982). In 1983-1984 he was a member of the Istiqlal delegation that participated in the historic convention in Tunis of political parties of the Maghreb. This helped to lay the groundwork for the Arab Maghreb Union (AMU) and for Fassi's later diplomatic career.

13. From October 1977 to November 1981 he served as the Minister of Housing. In September 1984, he was elected MP from Larache in north-western Morocco. He served as Minister of Handicrafts and Social Affairs from November 1981 to April 1985. He was the Moroccan Ambassador to Tunisia and the Arab League from 1985 to 1990, and was the Moroccan representative to the Secretariat of the Arab Maghreb Union from January 1990 to July 1990. He was Ambassador to France from 1990 to 1994 and then returned to political party work.

14. In February 1998, he was elected Secretary General of the Istiqlal party, replacing M'hamed Boucetta. From September 2000 to September 2002 he was nominated Minister of Employment, Professional Training, Social Development and Solidarity.

15. After his election to Parliament in 2002, he was named Minister of State (without portfolio); the number 2-ranking member of the government. He carried out many diplomatic functions, some involving the Western Sahara, and worked on international Islamic affairs, including leading the Moroccan delegation to the OIC. He has represented the King at foreign presidential inaugurations. He accompanied Foreign Minister Benaissa to Washington in October 2007, the most recent visit there.

16. He is married with four children: One daughter is a lawyer, one son is a banker, and the other son was elected on the Istiqlal party ticket to local government office.